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SUBJECT: UN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR WALLACE'S INQUIRY ON
RECENT ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT AT UNMIT

11. USUN is transmitting a June 5 letter from Assistant
Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jane Holl Lute

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answering Ambassador Mark Wallace's May 11 inquiry into
recent allegations of misconduct at the UN Integrated Mission
in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

12. Text of June 5 letter from Assistant-Secretary General
Jane Holl Lute:

Begin text:

Excellency,

Thank you for your letter dated 11 May 2007 expressing
concern on recent media reports of possible trafficking in
persons and other sexual exploitation violations by UN
personnel assigned to the UN Integrated Mission in
Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

The reports referred to were two articles published on 7 May
2007, entitled "UN turns blind eye to use of Timor brothels"
in The Age by Lindsay Murdoch and "UN under fire for turning
blind eye to peacekeepers' misconduct" in The Sydney Morning
Herald.

The Conduct and Discipline Team (CDT) in UNMIT, in
consultation with the mission Chief of Staff (COS), the Chief
Public Information Officer (PIO) and the Spokesperson, has
taken the following measures to address the issues raised in
the articles: i) re-broadcasting the UNMIT media policy
reminding staff of the procedures for dealing with the media,
and ii) sending a broadcast message to staff reaffirming the
conduct expected from UN staff, the obligation to report
specific cases of misconduct, the protection available for
"whistle blowers", and the drunk driving policy.

The CDT in UNMIT sent a fact-finding team to the location in
question and found it to be a stall. There had been no
evidence of the location acting as a brothel prior to the
articles' publication and there are presently no signs of
illegal activity, but UN Police (UNPOL) has been advised to
continue to patrol the area. In addition, the staff
member(s) who provided information to the journalist, Mr.
Murdoch, remain unidentified. As a best in UNMIT and other
missions, as soon as allegations are made, a preliminary
investigation or fact-finding mission is undertaken, and
appropriate action is taken accordingly.

To further facilitate these types of investigations, CDT in
UNMIT has created a task force along with UN police and UN
Security in order to set as off-limit or maintain control
over locations where illicit business, including gambling,
transactional sex, and use or trafficking of illegal drugs,
is conducted and tolerated. There are currently 30 such
locations under investigation. The mission will periodically
review and update the list of "off-limits" locations, as well

as check the locations regularly for suspected violations.

CDT in UNMIT continues to implement DPKO's zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse through prevention, enforcement and remedial action. There are currently three staff members in UNMIT CDT, including a Chief, one Conduct and Discipline Officer and one Administrative Assistant who deal on a daily basis with receiving and processing of complaints and allegations; counselling of victims; liaising with partner offices and agencies; conducting training on sexual exploitation and abuse for staff; preparing and revising material for dissemination and; coordinating and meeting with senior leaders, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on issues of conduct and discipline.

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With Conduct and Discipline Teams established in most of our peace operations, we will remain vigilant in addressing sexual exploitation and abuse and ensuring that UN personnel adhere to the standards of conduct set out for them. We are thankful for your concern and support on these issues and we will continue to keep you updated on our work.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Signed,

Jane Holl Lute
Assistant-Secretary General
for Peacekeeping Operations
WOLFF